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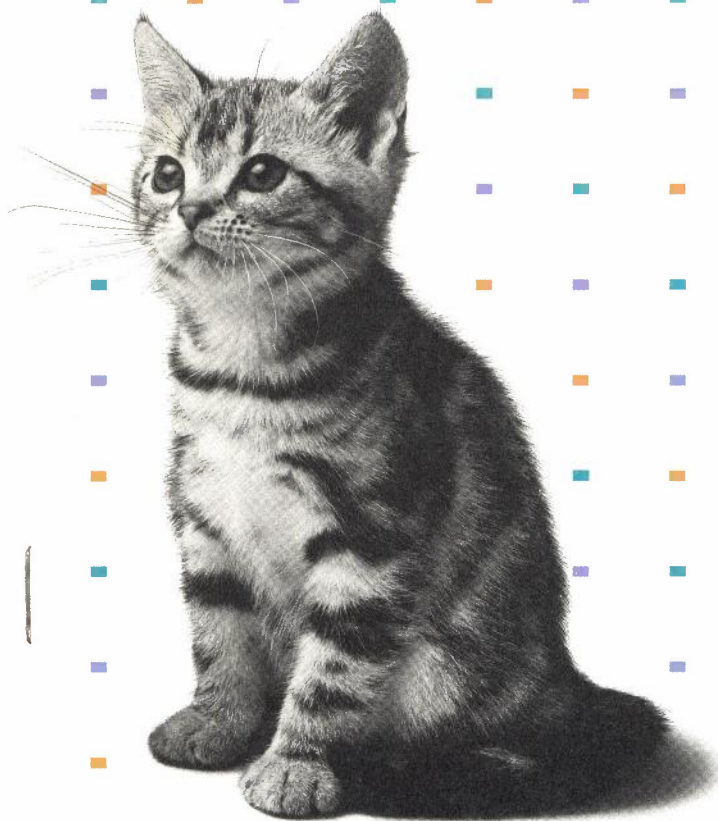
7250 Poe Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45414
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YOU AND YOUR

New Kitten

A guide to proper
care and training

"Treat her like a human, but
feed her like a cat."



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Congratulations on your new kitten.

She'll bring you many years of amusement and companionship. All she'll expect in return is a little effort from you to keep her safe, healthy and content.

Although cats make few demands on their owners, they still need lots of attention, particularly during their early months.



We know that first-time cat owners have many questions about their new pets. *You and Your New Kitten* can help to get you off to a good start. In these pages, we've included advice on how to handle your kitten's first days at home and on such basic needs as house-training, health care, feeding, grooming and first aid.

Although we've tried to cover most of the essentials, you'll almost certainly have some questions we haven't answered. To help you find out more about cats and their special needs, we've included a list of recommended books on page 30.

Remember, though, that the most knowledgeable source of information about your kitten is your veterinarian, breeder, groomer or pet store specialist. They know your kitten and can help you learn what's best for her.

Before you bring your kitten home, you should also select a veterinarian and set up a program of preventive health care for your kitten. Your breeder, other cat owners or the local humane society can all help you find the name of responsible doctors, but it's important to find someone you can be comfortable with. So take the time to get acquainted with a veterinarian before you make an appointment for your kitten's first visit.



Preparing Your Home or Apartment

Before you bring your kitten home, think carefully about possible hazards in her environment. These include electrical cords, candles, fireplaces, cigarettes, irons, washing machines, trash cans, sharp utensils, needles, pins, plastic bags, open cupboards and drawers, high balconies, detergents, cleaning products and poisonous plants. A small kitten can find her way into surprising places, so be careful to keep dangerous objects out of range.

Also keep in mind that many commonly-used cat toys—such as yarn, string, rubber bands, aluminum foil and cellophane—can be dangerous if they are accidentally swallowed. Your kitten should play with such objects only with your supervision.

Your kitten can't judge what's safe and what isn't. She needs *your* help.

It will also help to have certain basic supplies already waiting when your kitten comes home. All of these are readily available and relatively inexpensive; some may even be improvised from household odds and ends.

Beds and Bedding

The most important thing you can do to make your new kitten feel at home is to have a corner already furnished with a basket and cushion.

Cat beds come in many varieties, from elaborate cat beds sold at pet stores to a homemade wooden box. The size of your cat's bed should be in proportion to his adult size. Bear in mind, though, that cats prefer to sleep curled up rather than stretched out in a large space.

For your kitten's first bed, a corrugated cardboard box with sides and twelve inches high will suffice. The high sides will help her feel more secure and will also help to keep out drafts. Cut out a doorway in the front and line the box with a pillow or cushion covered in washable fabric. Place the bed in a warm, quiet corner of your house or apartment.

Don't be disappointed, however, if your kitten doesn't prefer your chosen sleeping space. It may take a bit of experimentation to arrive at sleeping quarters both you and your kitten can agree on.

Cat Carrier

A cat carrier is essential, even if you plan to travel no further with your kitten than the veterinarian's office. Most pet stores stock a variety of traveling baskets. Look for one that will be roomy, well-ventilated, escape-proof and easy to clean. Be sure to choose a quality cage. Avoid cages that have sharp exposed edges that could injure your kitten or protrusions that could snag your kitten's collar and choke her.

The most useful cat carriers are made of lightweight plastic or fiberglass. Wicker carriers may be more attractive, but they are drafty and hard to clean.

Food and Water Bowls

You'll need two heavy ceramic or stainless steel bowls; one for food and one for water. If you have more than one kitten, each should have a set of its own. Fresh water should be available to your kitten at all times and her dishes should be washed after every meal.

Litter Box

A litter box, cat litter and a scoop are essential. Even if your kitten has access to an outdoor area, she should not be let out until she has adjusted to her new home. Her litter box should always be accessible and easy to find. Choose a box that is deep enough to keep your kitten from scattering litter when she digs. It's best to use about two inches of litter in the bottom of the box.

Commercial litter doesn't have to be changed every day; just use the scoop to remove the wet places and feces and replace them with fresh litter. You should, however, wash the litter box once or twice a week with hot water. Be careful; some disinfectants—such as Lysol—can be toxic, and your kitten may be repelled by their scent.

Although shredded newspaper may appear to be a cost-effective alternative to commercial cat litter, it absorbs soil and odor less effectively and is harder to clean up. Moreover, it can encourage your kitten to use newspaper not intended for the purpose.

Using a high-quality cat food like Iams Cat or Kitten Food, available at special places such as veterinary clinics, pet stores and specialty outlets, will help to reduce litter box odors. It will also help to minimize your kitten's trips to the litter box, sparing you both litter costs and clean-up time.

Kittens less than eight weeks old may be too small to use an adult-size litter box; an inexpensive aluminum or plastic pan with a two inch rim will suffice until the kitten is able to graduate to a regular box.

Pregnant women need to be aware of toxoplasmosis, a disease carried by cats that can cause birth defects. Toxoplasmosis is a common disease that afflicts people as well as pets. But the cat is the only animal known to expel the parasite in its feces. If pregnant, you should use gloves while handling the litter box and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards. Your cat can be kept free of infection by feeding it only commercial food and keeping her indoors.

Brushes and Combs

Grooming should be a regular part of your cat's routine. Although your kitten will probably want to make a game of it and try to bite the brush and comb, she will soon come to appreciate the attention she receives. (See page 22 for details on grooming.)

Scratching Posts

A scratching post will give your kitten a place to stretch and exercise, as well as a way to keep its claws in proper condition. It will also help to prevent her from using your furniture to satisfy these needs.

Show your kitten how to use a scratching post, so she will be less likely to damage a piece of your furniture.



Most pet stores offer a variety of scratching posts, but you can easily construct one of your own by covering an appropriate piece of wood with carpet, tree bark or coiled rope. If you use carpet, make sure it is not the deep-pile kind; the fluffy surface can't offer enough resistance for your cat's claws. The posts may be mounted on a wall or made free-standing by attaching it to a sturdy wooden base.

Leash and Collar or Harness

Unlike their canine counterparts, most cats don't like to walk on a leash. Some cat breeds—notably Siamese—do enjoy walking with their owners on a leash. For cat owners in urban environments, however, a leash may be the only way for your kitten to enjoy the outdoors. If you plan to use a collar or harness, your kitten should be introduced to it early on.

A collar should be elastic or have a breakaway section, so that the kitten can escape if the collar catches on some object. A collar or harness should carry identification, in the event your kitten gets lost.

The first days of your kitten's life in her new home are important in building a happy relationship between your kitten and her adopted "family." For that reason, it's best not to introduce your kitten to your household during particularly busy times such as holidays and birthdays. A new kitten needs a quiet environment and lots of care from her new owners—two things that can be hard to provide during the hustle and bustle of family celebrations.

Arrival of Your New Kitten

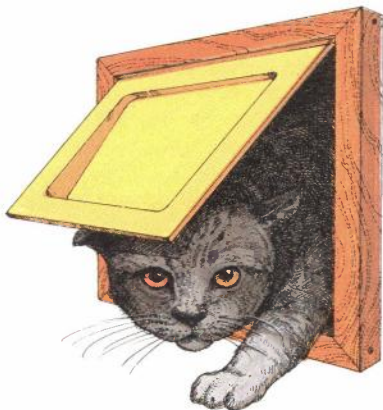
When you bring your new kitten into your home for the first time, she'll probably be a bit apprehensive. It's best to keep her in one room until she's grown accustomed to it, before opening the door to allow her to roam through the rest of your house or apartment. Give your kitten plenty of attention and be prepared to spend time playing with her while she becomes acquainted with her new home.

Exploring

A new kitten needs time to settle into her new surroundings. During her first weeks in your home, she should be allowed some quiet time to explore each room thoroughly. Only after she has grown accustomed to her indoor environment and has adjusted to a regular feeding schedule should you allow her to venture out of doors. If you acquire a kitten during the winter, you should wait for warmer weather before allowing her outside.

Whether or not your kitten should be permitted access to the outdoors is an individual decision. Although she will have more opportunity for exercise, she will almost certainly be exposed to many more dangers, such as automobile traffic and dogs. Whatever your choice, you should decide early on; once a cat has been given outdoor freedom, she will not easily be confined thereafter.

If you have chosen to give your kitten access to the outdoors (and if your home permits it), the addition of a cat door can be great convenience.



How to Pick Up Your Cat

Pick up your cat by placing one hand under the chest behind the front legs. Place the other hand under her hindquarters to support her weight and lift the cat into the crook of your arm.

A small kitten may be lifted by the scruff of the neck, as long as her hindquarters are supported. An older cat should only be lifted in this way, however, if she is behaving aggressively.



Getting Along With Other Pets

If you already have another pet, you should take special care in introducing it to your new kitten. If the two pets meet unplanned, they could become lifelong enemies. It is probably best to confine your other pet while your kitten explores her new surroundings. Once she's learned to find her way around the house, the best time for her to meet an existing pet is at meal time. Each animal should be given its own dish, well apart from the other. Chances are your older pet will not even notice the newcomer until after he has finished feeding, and the encounter is likely to be more relaxed all around.

The younger the existing pet, the better will be the chances of peaceful co-existence. You should be prepared to break up a fight, however, if one develops. If your resident pet is an adult dog, you should probably keep him on a leash or confine the kitten in a wire cage. A dog can seriously injure a small kitten with one snap of his jaws.

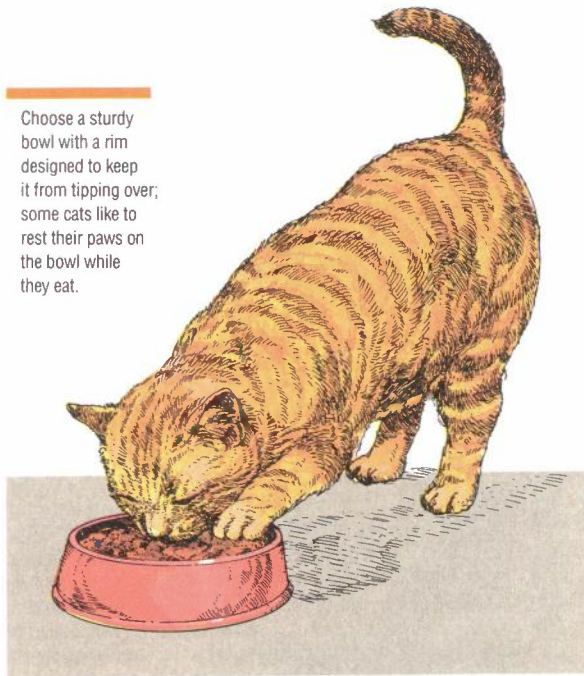
If you have birds or fish, the situation will be the reverse, and appropriate precautions should be taken to protect them from harm by your kitten.

A kitten's nutritional requirements are more demanding than those of an adult cat. A high-quality meat-protein food like Iams Kitten Food will provide the proteins and other nutrients that are essential during this important growth stage.

Iams recommends a scheduled, portion-controlled method of feeding Iams Kitten Food for most kittens. Feed your kitten half her recommended daily portion in the morning and half in the evening. Remember that the amount may vary according to the age, temperament and activity level of your kitten.

Recognizing that the predominant factors which cause the majority of cases of F.U.S. or Feline Urologic Syndrome are high urinary pH and a high dietary magnesium level, The Iams Company has formulated Iams Cat and Kitten Foods to specifically help overcome these factors and thereby aid in the prevention of F.U.S.

Choose a sturdy bowl with a rim designed to keep it from tipping over; some cats like to rest their paws on the bowl while they eat.



Feeding Tips

When feeding your kitten, you should keep these factors in mind:

Respect your kitten's privacy. Don't disturb her while she's eating.

Food and water bowls should be placed in quiet, out-of-the-way places.

Be sure your kitten has fresh water at all times, especially during warmer weather. Frequent drinking will help your kitten keep her system healthy and may help to reduce the risk of Feline Urologic Syndrome (F.U.S.)

Place your kitten's water dish at least six feet away from its food. That way she won't learn to associate water only with eating.

Use a bowl that your kitten cannot tip over easily. Clean her food and water dishes daily.

As a general rule, follow the feeding instructions that come with your pet food.

Be flexible. Feeding instructions are only guidelines. Cats generally regulate their eating habits in accordance with their needs. The amount of food your kitten needs will vary with age, weight, breed, temperament, environment and activity level.

If you use a dry food, such as Iams Kitten Food, you can leave a recommended daily quantity in your kitten's dish and let her choose her own meal times. Cats seldom overeat unless they are routinely tempted with large amounts of food.

Although some owners choose to supplement commercial cat foods with milk, this should never be necessary if the commercial food is nutritionally balanced and complete. Moreover, a large number of cats cannot properly digest the lactose in milk and may develop gas or diarrhea.

Playtime for Kittens

Kittens seem to live to play. Actually, each day is an important adventure which helps the kitten in its development of intelligence, dexterity, and its relationships with humans and other animals. The mother cat generally provides the stimulation for the kitten's development. But you and your family can have a great effect on the temperament and emotional development of your kitten.

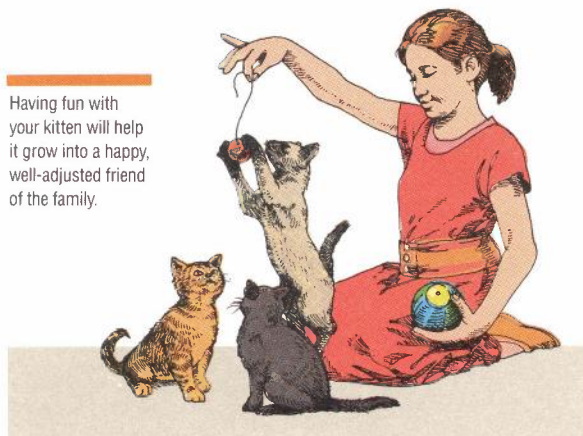
Play and exercise are important for your kitten's development. Get her a toy—a ball, rubber mouse, or anything it can play with and not be injured. Its hunting instincts will develop; its reflexes will become sharp.

Kittens and young cats, when treated correctly, grow up to be happier, more curious, more emotionally stable and sure of themselves.

Kittens and Kids

A cat can make many contributions to a child's personal growth. She can help to instill in children a sense of nurturing and personal responsibility. Yet parents should not use a pet merely as a tool to teach children responsibility. Children may gradually assume more of a role in caring for your kitten, but they should always do so under your supervision.

Young children can often hurt a small animal because they fail to realize what can cause pain to her. It will not occur to a small child that picking up a kitten by one of its legs, or pulling its tail or making loud noises around her can actually hurt the animal. You should explain such things to them well before the kitten's arrival in your home. But, particularly with very young children, supervision is essential at all times.



Having fun with your kitten will help it grow into a happy, well-adjusted friend of the family.

Games Cats Play

Anyone who has watched kittens play and develop will notice that their play tends to follow certain patterns. Researchers who study cat behavior have identified four basic themes or "games" that seem to be common to all cats and essential to their development.

Play Fighting

This is one of the first games kittens learn, starting at the age of about three weeks. At first, kittens do not have the strength to hurt one another as they wrestle; as they grow stronger, they learn to control their play, so as not to injure one another. Even though their play may look rough at times, cats rarely injure themselves while play-fighting. Furniture and household treasures, however, are another story.

The Prey Pounce

In this game, the kitten generally hides behind some object (or in the grass), moves into a low crouch and pounces on her imaginary prey. The hapless "victim" may be his mother's tail or a litter mate, or it may simply be a small object lying on the floor.



The Bird Swat

This is similar to the prey pounce but includes a swat with the front foot, designed to stun the prey before administering the kill. Anyone who has ever dangled something on a string in front of a kitten has seen the bird swat in action.

The Fish Scoop

If the kitten finds a motionless object on the ground, she will often swing a front paw and scoop the object over her shoulder. She will then pivot around to pounce on the object, as if she has just scooped a fish out of a stream and is trying to keep it from wriggling off the bank.

Cats—and their owners—will often invent other special games and rituals of their own. These play sessions will continue long into the cat's adult life and constitute one of the greatest enjoyments of owning a cat.

Although cats are generally more resistant to illness than many other pets, they are constantly exposed to many health hazards, both from disease and from physical hazards in their environment. As a cat owner, you can help to ensure a long and healthy life for your pet by keeping her on a regular schedule of preventive medical care and by keeping a sharp eye out for dangers that she may encounter.



First Visit to the Veterinarian

Your kitten's first visit to the veterinarian will give you an opportunity to get to know your doctor better and to find out how to get help in case of an emergency. You should ask your veterinarian about your kitten's development, her current condition and how to keep her healthy. Depending on your kitten's age, your veterinarian may also administer vaccinations for feline distemper, upper respiratory infections, rabies, and feline leukemia. He may also treat your kitten for common parasites such as ear mites and roundworms. Your veterinarian will know what health schedule is right for your kitten.

Eyes and Ears

From time to time, your cat's eyes may have tears, or you may notice some dried discharge in the corners of her eyes. This not usually cause for alarm; the tears or discharge may be wiped away with a tissue dampened with warm water. If the tearing or discharge seems excessive, yellowish or mucus-like, you should check with your veterinarian.

You should check your cat's ears regularly. Clean dirty ears carefully with a cotton swab dipped in water. If you notice that your kitten is constantly shaking her head or scratching at her ears, the problem may be ear mites. If diagnosed promptly, ear mites can usually be eliminated with ear drops. Ask your veterinarian.

Teeth

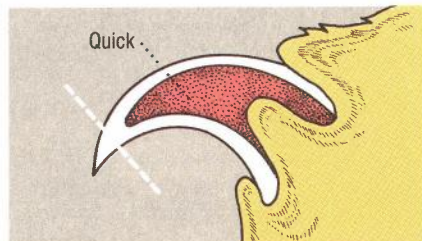
Teeth should be examined regularly for tartar and inflamed gums. Feeding a dry food can prevent some dental problems. If your kitten has bad breath, salivates excessively or has difficulty eating, she may have a dental problem. Again, consult your veterinarian.

Trimming Claws

Cats with access to the outdoors or to scratching posts should have no need to have their claws trimmed. Some breeds, however, may require claw trimming a few times a year.

To trim your kitten's claws, hold the paw firmly, squeezing it slightly to extend the claws. Clip a bit at a time, being careful not to cut into the sensitive "quick." For beginners, the risk of cutting off too much is considerable. This task should probably be entrusted to your veterinarian or groomer—at least until you have seen it done often enough to feel comfortable trying it yourself.

The recommended trim is shown here.



Symptoms of Illness

If you spend time with your kitten every day, you will quickly get to know its normal personality, behavior, feeding routine and elimination habits. Changes in these usually indicate that something may be wrong with your kitten.

Any of the following may be symptoms of illness:

- Excessive thirst
- Sudden weight loss or gain
- Changes in color or condition of skin
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty in breathing
- Difficulty in urination or blood in urine
- Dull or patchy coat
- Fever
- Lack or loss of appetite
- Sluggishness or odd behavior
- Red or watery eyes, nasal discharge
- Vomiting

Tips for Giving Medication to Your Kitten

Most pet owners will probably have to administer medication to their pet sooner or later. You should always have your veterinarian demonstrate the proper method for administering medication. We've provided a few tips on the best way to give medication.

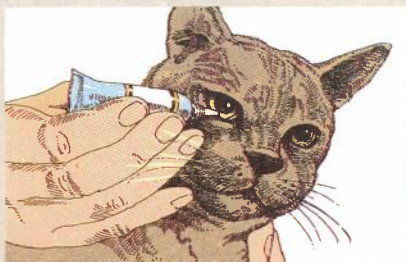
Pills and Liquids

If you need to give your kitten pills or capsules, place her on your lap and lift her head up. Press on the corners of the mouth to pry it open, and push the medicine as far back on the tongue as possible. Hold your cat's mouth shut and stroke her throat with your free hand to make her swallow.

Liquid medicines may be administered with a plastic syringe. Tilt her head up, insert the syringe tip into the space between your cat's cheek and her back molars and slowly but deliberately squirt the liquid into her mouth.

Eye Medications

To apply eye medications, hold the cat's head firmly, using the thumb and forefinger to open the eyelid. With the other hand, apply the ointment or eyedrops to the center of the eye, taking care not to touch the eye with the tube or dropper.



Ear Medications

Ear medications should be applied by holding the kitten firmly and turning the head to one side. Once the medicine is in the ear, massage gently to help spread it into the ear canal.



Taking Your Kitten's Temperature

Most cats will resist having their temperature taken, so it's best to have someone assist you.

Have your helper hold the front shoulders while you hold the kitten firmly crossways on your lap. Lift the tail and insert the tip of the thermometer—lubricated with petroleum jelly—into the anus, keeping it in for about two minutes. Talk to the kitten in a soothing tone of voice. If the kitten resists a two-person effort, a third assistant may be needed to hold the hind legs as well.

Spaying and Neutering

One decision every cat owner must face is whether to spay or neuter. Unless you plan to breed your cat professionally, you and your cat will probably be happiest together if he or she is neutered or spayed. Whether for male or female, the operation is safe.

Neutered cats seldom suffer the sexual stresses of unneutered cats. Males usually will not spray your walls and furniture with urine; females will not become high-strung and jumpy when they go into season.

Female

While opinion varies, the best time to spay a female is probably just before she goes into her first heat, usually between six months and one year (although some breeds take as much as 18 months to mature). At this stage, the organs may be removed without altering the cat's basic physical make-up. Your veterinarian can advise you on the best timing for your cat.

The operation usually requires an overnight stay in the hospital, followed by a few days of quiet recuperation at home.

Male

For males, the best time to neuter is when the odor of the urine changes to a more pungent smell, an indication that the kitten has sexually matured. The age range for males is also usually between six months and a year. Again, your veterinarian will know what time is best for your kitten. For males, the operation is even simpler; you can usually drop your kitten off in the morning and pick him up that same evening. His physical appearance will not be greatly altered, since the operation removes only the testes, not the scrotum.

Despite your best efforts to keep your kitten from harm, accidents will happen, and it's best to be prepared when they do. It's important to remain calm, act swiftly and get your kitten to the veterinarian as quickly as possible.

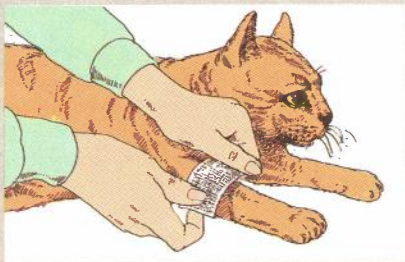
Accidents

A cat who has been hit by a car or has fallen from a great height should be taken to a veterinarian as quickly as possible. Pick her up as gently as possible, avoiding any excess movement of her body. If the cat is lying calmly on its side, scoop her up with one hand under the chest and the other under the hips. Be careful not to twist the body. Put the cat on a clean towel or newspaper in a cat carrier or cardboard box. Put a soft blanket or towel over the cat to keep her warm and protect her from shock.

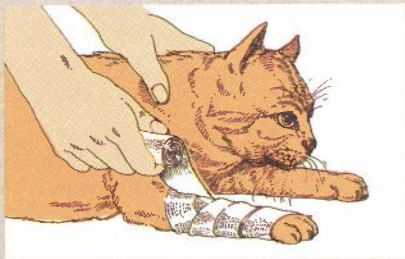
In the case of minor external bleeding, cover the wound with gauze or a clean handkerchief and apply direct pressure with your fingers.

Bandaging a Wound

Cover the wounded area with gauze and place an absorbent layer of cotton on top.



Firmly wrap the bandage around the wounded limb. See your veterinarian as soon as possible.

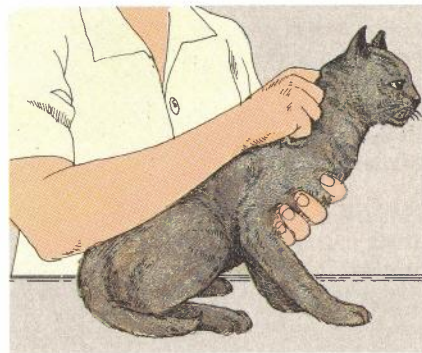


Poisoning

Unless you have seen your cat consume the poison, poisoning may be very difficult to diagnose. In almost every case, you are better off trying to get your cat to a veterinarian as quickly as possible. If you can identify the poison, you should try to bring a sample of it (or its container) with you to the veterinarian.

Some poisons cause shock. For this reason, you should try to keep the cat warm by wrapping it in a towel or blanket while you seek veterinary help.

A cat in pain is apt to be violent. She may be restrained by wrapping her in a towel or blanket, or, if none is available, by holding her by the scruff of the neck.



Drowning

A drowned cat may sometimes be revived by mouth-to-nose resuscitation. To perform, first close the cat's mouth and gently but repeatedly blow puffs of air into both nostrils by covering them with pursed lips. Allow air to escape by removing your mouth between puffs. You should notice the cat's chest rising slightly as you blow.

Burns

The most important part of first aid for burns is to prevent shock and to get the cat to a veterinarian promptly. Heat burns may be treated by promptly dosing the injured area with cold water and applying a cold compress. Electrical burns—common with young cats who like to chew through electrical wires—can result in shock and cardiac arrest. In extreme cases, artificial respiration and cardiac massage may be necessary. Contact your veterinarian as soon as possible.

Although cats work hard to keep themselves clean, you should supplement your cat's hygiene with regular grooming sessions to keep her coat free from parasites, dandruff, loose hair and tangles.

Bathing

If you plan to bathe your kitten, it's important to accustom her to the routine at an early age. A first bath can be a disconcerting experience, so you may want to find someone to help hold your kitten during the ordeal.

Put a rubber mat or towel in the bottom of a basin or large bowl and fill it with a shallow amount of warm water. While holding the kitten firmly, wet her body—using a spray if one is available—starting with the head. Shampoo your kitten with a cat or pet shampoo, being careful not to get lather in her eyes or ears. Rinse her gently with warm water and dry her with a towel. She should be kept out of drafts until her coat has thoroughly dried.

If you feel uncomfortable about bathing and grooming your kitten, you may want to seek advice from a professional groomer.

Tools You'll Need

Rubber brush

Cotton swabs

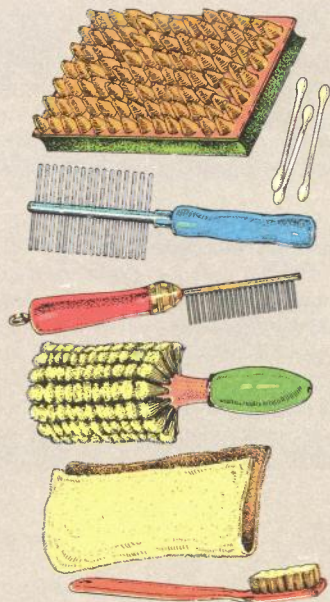
Wide-tooth comb

Fine-toothed comb

Soft, pure-bristle brush

Chamois cloth

Toothbrush



Brushing and Combing

Cats should be groomed on a newspaper or other disposable surface to collect any loose hair or debris. As you groom, you should check carefully for ticks and fleas. If you have not had previous experience in combating these parasites, you should consult promptly with your veterinarian or groomer, who can suggest an effective course of action.

Although cats are generally fastidious about their own grooming, a little attention from their owners is helpful from time to time.



Furballs

Cats who groom themselves often, especially long-haired cats, are likely to develop furballs. These are loose hairs that gradually accumulate in the stomach.

Usually furballs are regurgitated or eliminated through the intestines. If they are not, however, your cat may become unable to nourish herself properly. She will make frequent trips to her feeding dish but consume only a few mouthfuls at a time. Gradually, she will begin to lose weight.

Although some advanced cases may call for more drastic attention, your veterinarian will probably prescribe medication which may be administered at home.

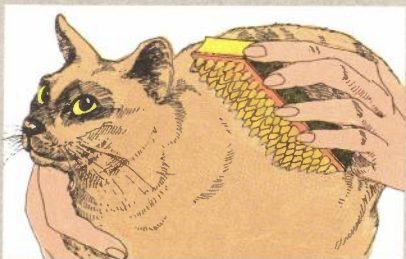
Grooming a Short-haired Cat

A short-haired kitten demands only occasional grooming. Even though she does quite a good job of grooming herself, a regular schedule of brushing your cat is still important. And she probably will enjoy it. Her coat is much easier to manage than that of a long-haired cat.

Draw the fine-toothed comb from the head toward the tail.



Brush along the lie of your cat's coat with a bristle brush, or use a rubber brush if she happens to be sensitive.



Use pet or cat shampoo to remove grease from the coat.



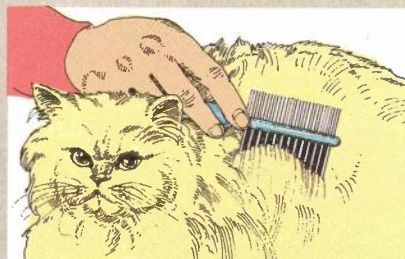
Finishing off the grooming session with a chamois or silk pad will give your cat's coat extra polish and sheen.



Grooming a Long-haired Cat

A long-haired kitten needs more frequent attention. You'll need to brush her thoroughly at least once a week, and more often when she begins shedding her old coat. Since long-hairs are more susceptible to furballs, frequent combing to remove loose, dead hair is very important.

Use a wide-toothed comb to comb out debris and break up the matted fur.



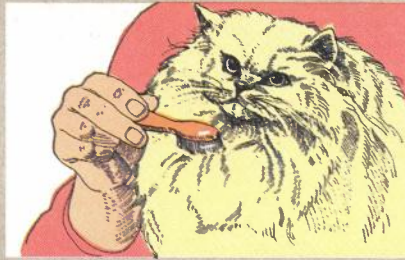
Remove dead hair using a wire brush, paying close attention to the cat's rump, where it is particularly heavy.



Brush in some talcum powder to help separate the long hairs. Brush the powder out completely.



You can use a toothbrush to gently brush the shorter hairs on the cat's face. The ruff around the neck may be brushed up to frame your cat's face.



Contrary to popular belief, cats can be trained—although it does take a little patience. The most important rule to remember is that rewards are much more effective than punishment. The delicate relationship between you and your kitten can easily be damaged by punishing her for misbehavior. A stern “no” can be effective, but more physical expressions of disapproval are almost invariably counter-productive.

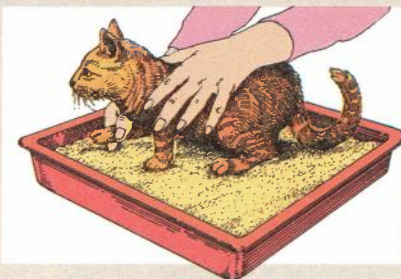
You should approach training a step at a time, continually rewarding desired actions and offering no encouragement for bad behavior.

Learning to Use a Litter Box

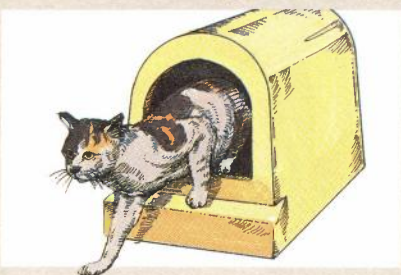
Training kittens to use a litter box is usually not very difficult. Many kittens will already have been trained by their mothers before you get them. If your kitten does not understand how to use one, you will need to show her what to do.

Observe your kitten carefully, particularly when she wakes up and after mealtimes. If you notice that she is about to defecate, put her quickly into the litter box. She should catch on readily.

Show your kitten what to do by putting her in the litter box and scratching its front paws in the litter.



Some cats may prefer the privacy of a covered litter-box; and it can also prevent your cat from scattering the litter when she digs.



Teaching Your Kitten to Come When Called

No kitten will come to an owner if she expects to be punished. Only love and reward can persuade your kitten to come when you call her name.

Use your kitten's name regularly at mealtimes and petting sessions. Once she begins to associate her name with pleasant experiences, try adding the word “come” just after it. Use this technique just before you set down her feeding dish. Once she has begun to grasp the meaning of the new command, reinforce her behavior with a reward and affection.

Saving Furniture

Once a kitten learns to use furniture and draperies to sharpen her claws, it will be hard to convince her to stop. Start her out right by training her on a scratching post. As with litter box training, the secret is to show the kitten what to do. Hold her near the post and scratch her claws on the surface. She'll soon form an attachment to her new exercise toy.

Declawing

Some veterinarians recommend declawing for a kitten who cannot be prevented from clawing her owners and destroying their property. To help you make your decision, you should talk with your veterinarian or with fellow cat owners who have had their pets declawed. If you decide against declawing, you may find that training or a supervised program of behavior modification can remedy the problem.

Walking Your Cat

Although cats, unlike dogs, do not take naturally to walking on a leash, they can be trained to do so—provided you start while your cat is still a kitten.

For this purpose, you'll need a leash and a harness (collars are too easily slipped off). Begin with short walks in your kitten's familiar surroundings before venturing out of doors. Let your kitten wander where she likes—provided she stays out of danger. Don't try to make her heel like a dog; let her follow along in your footsteps if she likes.

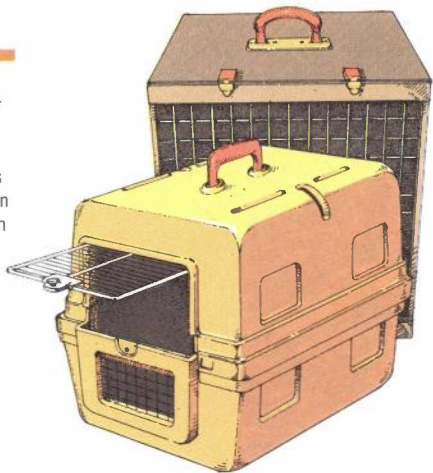
With a few training sessions each week, you'll find that your cat will look forward to brief outings with you on a regular basis.

All cat owners have to cope with the problem of what to do when they are away from home. If your trip is brief, you may decide to take your kitten along with you; in other circumstances, you will probably want to leave her in someone else's care.

Leaving Your Cat Behind

If you decide to leave your kitten behind when you travel, the best solution—although the most expensive—is to hire a sitter to watch the kitten in your own home. Although a professional sitter will only come once or twice each day, the kitten will have the consolation of being in a familiar environment. The sitter should be expected to provide more than food and water; he should also groom and exercise with your kitten and provide her with a changing assortment of toys to play with.

If you accustom your kitten to her carrier from an early age, it will make future trips to the veterinarian or groomer much easier.



Boarding a kitten can be stressful to her, since she is on unfamiliar territory with unfamiliar animals. If you need to use a cattery, you should find one where you can establish a comfortable, long-term relationship. Introduce your kitten to it while she is young; older cats don't adjust to unaccustomed surroundings very well.

A cattery should provide an individual area for sleeping and exercise. It should be well lighted and ventilated and spotlessly clean. Insist that your cat be fed her regular brand of cat food during her stay, to prevent undue stress to her system. Many catteries will permit you to bring your cat's own bed and toys; these will help her to better adjust to her surroundings.

Other cat owners—or your breeder or veterinarian—can help you find a responsible boarding establishment. Don't wait until the last minute to make your search. Before boarding your kitten you should also make sure that her immunization record is completely up to date.

Traveling With Your Kitten

Accustom your kitten to travel when she is young, even if you do not expect to travel with her often in the future. Even the occasional trip to the veterinarian will be more pleasant if your kitten has been exposed to the routine of traveling with you.

Whether you use your car or take public transportation, a cat carrier is an essential piece of equipment. Introduce it to your kitten at an early age and let her get accustomed to going in and out of it. Start with a short trip and gradually increase the length of the journey. If the cat complains, talk to her in a calming voice, but don't let her out of her carrier under any circumstances.

Avoid leaving your kitten in the car, even for a short while. In the summer, temperatures inside a parked automobile can rise to fatal extremes in only minutes. If you must leave the kitten in your car in hot weather, park in the shade and roll the windows down. Merely cracking them won't provide adequate ventilation.

Travel Regulations

If you travel outside the United States, a rabies vaccination is essential; you will not be able to re-enter the U.S. without it. You should also make sure that your cat's other vaccinations are current.

An official health certification should be dated no more than a week before you begin your trip. Many countries require the certificate to be translated into their language and notarized by the consulate. Some destinations—among them Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the state of Hawaii—require arriving animals to be quarantined for as long as several months to guard against rabies. This effectively rules out vacation travel with your kitten to these places.

The local office of the U. S. Department of Agriculture can help to guide you through the often bewildering maze of international regulations.

A Lifelong Commitment

Cat ownership is an important responsibility, though one that brings with it many lasting rewards.

The Iams Company shares the commitment you feel toward your kitten and has dedicated itself to producing quality products that can enhance her health and well-being.

As part of our commitment, we maintain a toll-free telephone service (1-800-525-4267) to answer questions and provide helpful information about the feeding and care of your cat. Our full-time staff of animal nutritionists and veterinarians can help you find the answers to your questions.

Have fun with your kitten. The Iams Company wishes you both many happy years together.

- References** *Catwatching*. Desmond Morris, New York: Crown Books.
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The New Cat Handbook. Ulrike Mueller. New York: Barron's.



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